

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

THE PUPIL'S CASE BOOK.

The Central Midwives Board is concerned at the present misuse and over-emphasis of the pupil's case book which is completed during the Second Period training and produced to the examiners before the second examination. The Secretary has been directed, therefore, to recapitulate the objects of the case book, which are as follows:

1. To encourage continuity, *i.e.*, that so far as is practicable the pupil shall follow the progress of her patients and be responsible for them from the time she first sees them during pregnancy till the end of the puerperium.
2. To ensure that record keeping is adequately taught. When the new training rules first came into force record keeping in certain of the schools was very poor indeed.
3. At the examination to give some indication of the candidate's intelligence, accuracy, neatness and understanding of her subject.
4. To provide the examiner with material on which to base a discussion. On the candidate's ability to discuss cases she attended it should be possible to assess with some degree of accuracy her practical knowledge and her suitability for enrolment as a midwife.

The Board has decided, therefore, to alter its present examination procedure in that the pupil-midwife will bring her case book to the examination and may produce it, if requested by the examiner, to discuss some particular case, or cases, which she has conducted during her second period of training. It is hoped that this system will decrease the labour of the examiners in the checking of all case books before the date of the examination, but will still provide them with adequate subject matter for discussion to enable them to assess the pupil-midwife's standard of training.

The Secretary has also been directed to emphasize that in the Board's view, the case book should be a clinical record of practical work undertaken by the pupil-midwife written up at the time of the case; that erasures and alterations should be accepted and that no time should be given to rewriting a "copy-book" case book for the examiners. It is hoped that both training schools and examiners will give due regard to this policy.

The new procedure of pupil-midwives bringing case books to the examination instead of forwarding them in advance to the Board's office will come into effect at the March, 1948, Second Examination.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THIRD QUARTER, 1947.

Fewer babies die; two new low records.

Two new low records in vital statistics were set up in England and Wales in the September, 1947, quarter—both the still-birth and infant mortality rates were the lowest ever recorded.

Births.

Detailed figures* for the quarter ended September 30th are announced by the Registrar-General. A total of 216,310 live births registered in England and Wales during the quarter was 3,529 more than in the corresponding quarter of last year. It was the highest number recorded

* Registrar-General's Quarterly Return of Births, Deaths and Marriages for the September Quarter, 1947. (H.M.S.O., price 6d., post free 7d.)

in any third quarter since 1920, but 18,727 fewer than in the second quarter of this year. The birth rate of 20.0 per 1,000 total population compares with 19.7 for the September quarter of 1946, and an average of 15.7 for the third quarters of the five years, 1941-1945; the rate for the second quarter of this year was 22.0, and for the first quarter 22.8, which was the highest quarterly rate since the June quarter of 1921. Illegitimate births, which are included in the total of 216,310, were 11,431, or 5.3 per cent. of the total births, compared with 13,324, or 6.3 per cent. in the same period of 1946.

There were 5,024 still-births, representing 22.7 per 1,000 of the total live and still-births. This rate is the lowest yet recorded in this country in any quarter. It is 3.9 lower than that for the third quarter of 1946 and, compared with the corresponding quarter of 1937, shows a decrease of 38 per cent.

Deaths.

Deaths registered in the quarter were 97,066, giving a death rate of 9.0 per 1,000, compared with 9.3 for the corresponding quarter of 1946; there was a proportion of 1,072 males to 1,000 females.

The deaths of children under one year of age numbered 7,129. The provisional infant mortality rate of 32 per 1,000 related live births was the lowest ever recorded for any quarter in this country.

Population.

For the first time in the Quarterly Return of the Registrar-General an estimate of the population, civilian and total, sub divided by sex and age-groups, is given. The civilian population at June 30th is returned at 42,006,000, of which 19,707,000 are males and 22,299,000 females; the total population (*i.e.*, inclusive of the armed forces and merchant service at home and abroad) is given as 43,270,000, of which 20,917,000 are males and 22,353,000 are females, and of these 6,241,000 males and 6,283,000 females are between the ages of 15 and 35.

TO DEMONSTRATE NEWEST METHODS OF ANÆSTHESIA.

Professor Macintosh, F.R.C.S., D.A., who is Nuffield Professor of Anæsthetics in the University of Oxford, left Britain on January 24th for a lecture tour on behalf of the British Council in Finland, Sweden and Denmark.

Professor Macintosh will take his anæsthetic apparatus with him and will, besides demonstrating, actually take part as an anæsthetist in operations. His lectures will be upon the newest methods used in Great Britain.

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